

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SP-02 USIA-06 AID-05 EB-08
NSC-05 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-05 OMB-01 CEA-01 COME-00
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 /082 W
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P R 121531Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3916
INFO AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARAMARIBO 1356

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ECIN NS
SUBJ: SURINAM AND THE CARIBBEAN COOPERATION GROUP

1. AS OF MORNING OF DECEMBER 12, GENERAL AND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR VAN DER GELD REPORTED THAT NO
DECISION HAS YET BEEN TAKEN ON SURINAM REPRESENTATION AT
DECEMBER 14-15 WORLD BANK MEETING TO DISCUSS THE CARIBBEAN
COOPERATION GROUP. VAN DER GELD ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT THE
MATTER WILL BE DISCUSSED WITH MINISTER PRESIDENT ARRON LATER
IN THE DAY, AND HE ANTICIPATES ARRON WILL DESIGNATE SURINAM'S
AMBASSADOR TO THE U.S. KARAMAT AS SURINAM'S REPRESENTATIVE.

2. IN DEALING WITH SURINAM IN CONNECTION WITH THE CARIBBEAN
COOPERATION GROUP, WE THINK IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE USG
TO UNDERSTAND AND TO MAKE CLEAR TO SURINAM THAT WE UNDER-
STAND THAT THERE ARE VARYING DEGREES OF "CARIBBEANNESS"
AND THAT CHOOSING MEMBERSHIP IN THE GROUP DOES NOT MEAN
ACCEPTING THAT A COUNTRY IS ONCE AND FOR ALL CHARACTERIZED
FROM THE U.S. POINT OF VIEW AS A "CARIBBEAN" COUNTRY.
WHILE THERE ARE A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES (I.E. THE ISLAND
COUNTRIES LOCATED IN THE CARIBBEAN SEA) WHICH CONSIDER
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THEMSELVES AS DISTINCTLY CARIBBEAN, THAT IS NOT TRUE OF
SURINAM, WHICH CONSIDERS ITSELF NOT SO MUCH A CARIBBEAN
COUNTRY AS A COUNTRY NEAR THE CARIBBEAN SEA WHICH HAS
AND WANTS CERTAIN LIMMITED RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE CARIBBEAN
COUNTRIES BUT WHICH ALSO HAS, AND SETS A HIGHER
PRIORITY ON, ITS RELATIONSHIPS WITH HOLLAND AND THE EEC AND THE
MAJOR NATIONS ON THE SOUTH AMERICAN CONTINENT. IN THE

STRICTLY LIMITED CONTEXT OF THE COOPERATION GROUP, WE SEE NO REASON WHY SURINAM SHOULD NOT CONTINUE ITS ATTITUDE OF BEING WILLING TO LISTEN AND PERHAPS TAKE PART, ALBEIT CAUTIOUSLY, BUT ANY HINT THAT DOING SO WOULD THEREAFTER TYPE SURINAM IN U.S. EYES (SOME SURINAMERS MIGHT SAY "STIGMATIZE") AS A "CARIBBEAN" COUNTRY FOR OTHER CONTEXTS MIGHT CAUSE SURINAM TO DROP OUT.

3. WE NOTE FROM THE HAGUE'S 6915 THAT DUTCH DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION MINISTER PRONK (PRACTICALLY CERTAIN TO LOSE HIS JOB AS SOON AS THE NEW DUTCH GOVERNMENT IS FORMED) WILL ATTEND THE WORLD BANK MEETING ON BEHALF OF THE NETHERLANDS. THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE AWARE THAT PRONK RECENTLY MADE SOME CONTROVERSIAL REMARKS ABOUT THE SLOW PACE OF SURINAM'S DEVELOPMENT, ATTRIBUTING THE BLAME TO LACK OF SUFFICIENT DRIVE AND EFFORT ON THE PART OF SOME SURINAMERS. THESE REMARKS WERE COLDLY RECEIVED IN PARAMARIBO EXCEPT BY OPPOSITION ELEMENTS WHICH SOUGHT TO TURN THEM TO THEIR OWN POLITICAL ADVANTAGE. WE WOULD THUS CAUTION AGAINST RELYING TOO MUCH ON PRONK OR THE DUTCH TO FILTER OUR VIEWS ON CARIBBEAN COOPERATION THROUGH TO THE SURINAMERS. WE SHOULD APPROACH THEM DIRECTLY AND FORTHRIGHTLY BUT WITH UNDERSTANDING OF THEIR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES. ZURHELLEN

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